THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) and (b) The work is continuing on the project except on a 55 kms. stretch between Mayem and Balli in Goa State which has been stopped temporarily as an alternate route in that portion was suggested by 'NATPAK', a firm of consultants, claimed to be cheaper by Rs. 80 crores than the existing alignment. The matter has been referred to a High Level Committee under the retired Supreme Court Judge, Mr. Justice G. J. Oza. The Committee is expected to submit its report by 10-9-1993. The decision regarding alignment to be followed will be taken shortly thereafter and work will then be resumed.

All the issues in regard to the alignment were sorted out and settled at the commencement of the project.

(c) The Konkan Railway Corporation has intimated that the delay in resuming the work will entail cost and time over-runs. However, there is no proposal for winding up the operation of Konkan Railway Corporation.

Disappearance of Explosive Material from Gomia, Bihar

@*307. SHRI K. K. VEERAPPAN:
SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 500 kg. highly volatile explosive material while being transported from Gomia in Bihar to Assam has disappeared from a highly guarded railway coach;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any enquiry has been ordered and any employee suspended or arrested, if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any recovery of the missing explosives has been made; if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what steps are being taken to prevent such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) to (d) 250 kilograms of explosives contained in 10 cases out of a consignment of 360 cases, despatched from Gomia, Bihar, and meant for the Border Roads Organisation in Assam are reported missing. The incident is reported to have occurred in October, 1992, when the consignment was sent by rail from Gomia to Assam via West Bengal. Further details of the status in this regard are being ascertained.

(e) Detailed instructions have been sent to all States from time to time to exercise strict watch and vigilance regarding safety, security and transportation of explosives. The Government of India were have expressed concern to State Govts. about theft of explosives. The paramount importance of taking immediate steps to plug various loopholes in the existing arrangements and to ensure better safety and security in manufacture transportation, storage and use of explosives has been highlighted for taking necessary action on a priority basis. State Govts. have also been asked to take effective measures for recovery of explosives which might be available with anti-social and criminal elements.

Customs Duty Exemption for Importing Medical Equipments

@@*308. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that hospitals treating poor patients free, get Customs duty exemption to import essential medical equipment and if so, details thereof and of the import exemption procedures in this respect;

(b) what are the names of hospitals whose applications for exemption from Customs duty made since January 1, 1993, are pending till today, and what are the reasons for withholding their applications and what is the nature of equipment sought to be imported by each hospital; and

(c) what are the names of hospitals whose applications have been accepted since January 1, 1993 and the details of equipment given exemption in each case?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Customs Duty exemption on import of medical equipment is allowed subject to the fulfilment of conditions laid down in the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance

@Previously Starred Question 147, transferred from 5th August, 1993.

@@Previously Starred Question 207, transferred from 10th August, 1993.